

international flight, nor did I need to pass through customs on my way. And while my passport is in order, I can assure you I did not need it to land at Albuquerque International Sunport.

I might also remind the Senate, and also the Olympic organizers in Atlanta, that New Mexico was admitted to the Union as the 47th State in January 1912. It lies directly south of Colorado, east of Arizona, west of Texas, and north of the Mexican border. Let me repeat, north of the Mexican border. You may know it as one of the larger pieces in jigsaw puzzles of the United States.

In fact, New Mexico has one of the longest histories of any State in the Union, starting with our ancient Indian cultures, almost four centuries of Hispanic ancestry, and nearly 200 years of American settlement. It is a dramatic land of scenic vistas and 1.5 million proud citizens.

And let me remind the Olympic office that we had good reason to be proud during the last Olympics, for we had a great champion from New Mexico—Trent Dimas, who earned a gold medal in gymnastics. When Trent Dimas won this medal, it wasn't "O Fair New Mexico," New Mexico's State song, that was played during the ceremony. They played the National Anthem of the United States—surely an indicator that even in the context of the Olympics, New Mexicans are proud U.S. citizens. And those New Mexican athletes who visit the State of Georgia this summer to attend the Summer Olympics will do so as citizens of the United States, cheering our other terrific American athletes.

Let me wrap up by assuring the Atlanta ticket office that we in New Mexico are well practiced in the use of U.S. currency. We, too, use the dollar and not the peso. We're also well accustomed to potable drinking water and to driving our cars on the right side of the road. And I can't even imagine that those unique Southern accents will give New Mexicans any trouble.

So today, I put a little note in Senator NUNN's and Senator COVERDELL's mailboxes, asking them if they would do us a favor in New Mexico and vouch for us to the Olympic Committee in Georgia—and I'm assuming that would be Georgia, USA, not Georgia, Russia. Perhaps they could each send a note to the good people of Georgia to remind them that New Mexico, the Land of Enchantment, is a State. No need to refer New Mexicans to any embassy, customs office, passport center, or currency exchange office. We're one of you.

THE TRAVIS LETTER

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, this month marked the sesquicentennial of the end of the Republic of Texas.

But I rise this morning to celebrate the beginning of our Republic, not its end. One hundred sixty years ago Sat-

urday, March 2, a band of Texans gathered in Washington-on-the-Brazos and declared our Independence from Mexico. Around them raged a fierce war for that Independence. I would like the Senate to remember the many brave Texans who gave their lives in that war as I read the last letter sent from the Alamo on February 24, 1836. In reading this letter, I continue a tradition begun by my late friend, Senator John Tower. Here then is the letter of Col. William Barrett Travis, from his fort at San Antonio.

To the people of Texas and all Americans in the world:

Fellow citizens and compatriots—I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours and have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken. I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism and everything dear to the American character to come to our aid with all dispatch. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his own honor and that of his country. Victory or death.

P.S. The Lord is on our side. When the enemy appeared in sight we had not three bushels of corn. We have since found in deserted house 80 to 90 bushels and got in the walls 20 or 30 head of Beeves.

William B. Travis.—The Alamo, February 24, 1839.

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, 4 years ago I commenced these daily reports to the Senate to make a matter of record the exact Federal debt as of the close of business the previous day.

In that report (February 27, 1992) the Federal debt stood at \$3,825,891,293,066.80, as of the close of business the previous day. The point is, the federal debt has escalated by \$1,190,735,080,843.14 since February 26, 1992.

As of the close of business yesterday, February 28, 1996, the Federal debt stood at exactly \$5,016,626,373,909.94. On a per capita basis, every man, woman and child in America owes \$19,041.54 as his or her share of the Federal debt.

IMPORTED FOREIGN OIL BOX SCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the American Petroleum Institute reports that for the week ending February 23, the United States imported 6,094,000 barrels of oil each day, a 6.5-percent increase over the 5,698,000 barrels imported during the same period 1 year ago.

Americans continue to rely on foreign oil for more than 50 percent of their needs, and there are no signs that this upward trend will abate.

According to the January 30, New York Times article "Odds of Another Oil Crisis: Saudi Stability Plays a Large Role," Saudi Arabia, which sits on 25 percent of the world's proven oil reserves—that's approximately 260 billion barrels—is politically vulnerable. There is increasing tension between the Sunni majority and the Shiite minority; tensions within the royal family have been widely reported.

Mr. President, a power struggle could easily lead to violence with a disastrous effect on the price of oil. Of course, we all pray that Saudi Arabia remains stable, politically, economically, and otherwise. This is a concern that has bothered me for years.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the aforementioned article be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks and, needless to say, I hope Senators and their staffs will heed the very explicit warning in it.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ODDS OF ANOTHER OIL CRISIS: SAUDI STABILITY PLAYS A LARGE ROLE

(By Agis Salpukas)

Oil Shock III. Could it happen again?

With supplies of oil plentiful and the price of gasoline, adjusted for inflation, as low as it was in the bountiful 1950's, the notion that the world will go through another spike in oil prices like those in 1973-74 and 1979 seems farfetched. And with Iraq apparently on the verge of re-entering the market, nothing is likely to change soon. Indeed, prices may fall for a while.

But some oil industry experts—worried that Saudi Arabia, the linchpin of the world oil market, may be more vulnerable politically than is generally believed—are raising the specter of an oil price surge for the first time in years.

The talk has intensified because of the possibility, remote as it may be, of a battle to succeed the ailing King Fahd between Crown Prince Abdullah, the King's half brother, and Prince Sultan, a full brother. Both men control large armies.

On Jan. 1, the 74-year-old King handed over authority to Crown Prince Abdullah, 72, for an unspecified time while he recovered from exhaustion. The Crown Prince, long designated to succeed the King, is known as an Arab nationalist who may be less open than King Fahd to American policies.

Civil war between rivals for power or between the Sunni majority and the Shiite minority cannot be ruled out, says David P. Hodel, Secretary of Energy under President Ronald Reagan. And any instability in Saudi Arabia, which sits on 25 percent of the world's proven oil reserves, or 260 billion barrels, would have wide repercussions. The tendency in the United States, he warns, has been to "go merrily on our way as if there is no potential problem to world oil supply until it is too late."

"Sadly," he added, "the consequences can be devastating."

Most political leaders and industry executives say there is nothing to worry about. Another oil crisis is always possible, they concede, but it is highly remote. The United Nations World Economic and Social Survey 1995 confidently predicts that the real price for oil will remain roughly constant for the next 20 years.

"Nobody can say it won't happen," said Alfred C. DeCrane Jr., the chairman and chief

executive of Texaco Inc. "But an earthquake on the San Andreas Fault is more apt to happen than a disruption in oil."

Is that confidence overdone?

Saudi Arabia is still vital to feed the world's growing appetite for oil, which now totals about 62 million barrels a day. It accounts for a little more than 8 million of the 17 million barrels of oil that flow from the Middle East. And even though output outside the Middle East has been growing, there is not enough reserve capacity to fill the void if Saudi supplies are disrupted.

"The world needs Saudi Arabia," said John H. Lichtblau, the chairman of the Petroleum Industry Research Foundation, a private research group. In the event of upheaval, the question, Mr. Lichtblau said, is, "Will you be killed or just be hurt?"

Experts like Mr. Lichtblau offer the consolation thought that history demonstrates that even the most disruptive political events are unlikely to keep the crude oil from pumping for long.

Vahan Zanoian, senior director of a private consulting firm in Washington, the Petroleum Finance Company, generally agrees. He recently warned in an article in *Foreign Affairs* magazine that Saudi Arabia's leaders were frozen in time and had shown little inclination to respond to the decade-old drop in oil prices by reining in spending by the royal family and its entourage of princes, households and hangers-on.

"If in the next three to four years the Saudi Government resists reforms," he said in an interview, "you will see more often the types of riots and civil unrest partly caused by economic concerns and the rise of more Islamic movements. The oil markets in the world will not watch this kind of thing with detachment."

Yet even under the worst view—in which a fundamentalist Islamic group seizes power in Saudi Arabia—the new government will only hurt itself if it cuts off the supply of oil for a sustained period. "Sooner or later," he said, "the new leaders would have to export oil."

The best protection against a temporary cutoff in supplies lies in the United States Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which holds about 600 million barrels, enough to meet America's needs for 90 to 120 days. But growing complacency about the risk of another oil shock is leading some lawmakers to look at the reserve as a source of revenue today rather than an insurance policy for tomorrow. Senate Republicans have proposed selling 39 million barrels from the reserve to help reduce the budget deficit. And most companies have cut their own inventories of oil, leaving the nation with a smaller margin of protection.

There is also little will on the part of the public, political leaders or the oil industry to lessen the vulnerability by increasing conservation or supporting alternative energy sources.

"At the moment we're just letting things drift," said James R. Schlesinger, Energy Secretary under President Jimmy Carter, "when we should be alert to finding possible contingencies."

In the event of a crisis, the most likely outcome, many experts say, will not be a complete shutoff but the risk that any new leadership will decide to sacrifice maximum income for a while, cutting production over time in a bid to push up prices.

But not everybody is so confident that the worst can be avoided. Milton Copulos, president of the National Defense Council Foundation, a conservative group in Washington, raised the possibility of an oil crisis at Congressional hearings last year. "The optimists assume that the Arabs are exclusively motivated by economics," Mr. Copulos said. "The

Ayatollah Khomeini was not motivated by economics. Other militants are not motivated by economics."

Ultimately, of course, there is always the option of military force.

Walter E. Boomer, the president of the Babcock & Wilcox Generation Group and a former Marine Corps lieutenant general who was involved in the Persian Gulf war, said the United States had already demonstrated its commitment during the war to defend Western interests in the Middle East.

"If the country is threatened," he said, "we would make that commitment again."

INTERNATIONAL DRUG CERTIFICATION

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise to draw a line—a line that divides our nation from those countries who have fallen prey to the obscene influence of international drug cartels.

This week, the President will offer his decision—drawing his line—about which countries have cooperated sufficiently with United States counter-narcotics efforts to justify all the benefits of a full partnership with our Nation. This year, some of our neighbors have crossed the line and should not be "certified" as fully cooperating with the U.S. drug enforcement effort. Others of our neighbors are coming perilously close to crossing this line.

Before offering my specific views on which countries I believe have crossed this line, I want to offer my general views of this drug certification process. Foremost, the certification process does not seek to shift the full blame for the drug scourge solely to the drug-producing and transit countries. In fact, the comprehensive drug strategies I have offered call on the U.S. government and the U.S. people to remain vigilant and committed to attacking the drug problem at home.

But, as I have always recognized, slowing the flow of drugs into the U.S. must be an integral part of a comprehensive drug strategy. And this effort to cut the literally hundreds of tons of drugs flowing toward American shores must be assisted by all countries if they are to continue as our full partners in the family of nations.

Mr. President, let me make it real simple—any nation that wishes to enjoy the benefits of American friendship must do everything they can to help America fight the scourge of drugs. This is not an impossible task. We are not being unreasonable. We do not ask that the nations that have literally been held hostage by the drug cartels end the supply of drugs coming from their shores. That would be unreasonable—many of these nations just cannot eliminate all drug cartels, just as we cannot eliminate all of the mafia here in the U.S.

Still, America has the right to ask what is reasonable—no more but also no less. That has been my longstanding test, not only in the area of drug policy but also in other important questions of foreign policy, such as arms control.

To be more specific, I have long believed that a United States policy of

support and cooperation with our friends in Latin America is the best way to counter the drug threat. While it might make us feel better, isolation and incrimination of other countries rarely helps us meet our ultimate objectives. Particularly in the drug interdiction task, cooperation and shared intelligence are absolutely essential to an effective strategy because drugs can be hidden in any of the billions of legal containers that cross our border every year. And with no intelligence, we can never hope to stop these drugs.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that cooperation is usually the best policy, there are grave circumstances where both morality and practicality require America to draw the line.

I regret to conclude that for Colombia that line has been crossed. The United States should not certify that Colombia has done everything possible to curb the operations and influence of the illicit drug trade, primarily because of the corruption at the highest levels of the Colombian government.

I also conclude that for Mexico, that line is close to being crossed. This requires the U.S. to send a clear warning—just as we did last year to Colombia. Let me also point out that totally cutting off cooperation could make a bad situation very much worse, and it is simply not in our national interest to do so. Therefore, I recommend that a vital national interest waiver or similarly strong, unambiguous warning be sent to the Mexican government.

Even as I call for our nation to decertify Colombia, I recognize the immense challenges that the drug trade poses in that country. I admire the courage of the men and women in Colombian law enforcement—leaders such as the National Police Chief, General Serrano—who endure violent threats and even actual assaults on their Government institutions. Hundreds of honest, hard-working Colombians sacrificed their lives last year in the struggle against drug traffickers.

But, how can we assured of the Government's commitment against drug trafficking when the President himself almost surely benefited from the drug trade? The extent and level of official drug corruption in Colombia is the single most glaring failure—and the overriding reason I must recommend decertification.

President Ernesto Samper has been charged with accepting \$6 million in campaign funds from the Cali cartel—and may soon be impeached because of it. In addition, at least 20 members of congress are also under investigation for accepting drug funds.

I have long stated that such official corruption cannot be tolerated. Even if a nation is overwhelmed by the horrible powers of international drug cartels, as long as their leaders remain committed to fighting these cartels they deserve our support. But, once a nation's leaders have fallen under the corrupt influence of the drug cartels, morality and practicality require that they cannot be given our support.